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ABSTRACT

This education management profile of Thailand contains the following: basic information about the country, key educational indicators, brief comments about the country and its history, a description of the education system, the management of education, access to education and school enrollment, problems and challenges, educational reform in Thailand, directions toward reform, and key educational statistics and basic data. (Contains 10 references.) (DFR)

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EDUCATION MANAGEMENT PROFILE

Thailand

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Contents

	Page
Basic Information	1
Key Educational Indicators	1
The Country in Brief	1
The Traditional Education System	2
The Current Education System	3
The Administrative Structure	5
Access to Education and Enrolment	7
Private Institutions, Enrolment and Their Roles	8
Nonformal Education	8
Education for Minorities and the Handicapped	9
The Education Reform	10
Future Directions and Trends	11
Selected Educational Statistics	14
Chart 1: Gross Enrolment Ratio at Each Level	14
Chart 2: Proportion of Students at Each Level	14
Chart 3: Proportion of Male and Female Teachers at All Levels	14
Chart 4: Proportion of Male and Female Students at All Levels	15
Chart 5: Number of Public and Private Institutions	15
Chart 6: Proportion of Students from Public and Private Institutions	15
Chart 7: Number of Participants in Nonformal Education	16
Chart 8: Proportion of NFE Participants in Each Department	16
Chart 9: Proportion of Male and Female Participant in NFE	16
Chart 10: Qualification of Teachers in Private and Public Schools	17
Chart 11: Qualification of Academic Staff at the Tertiary Level	17
Chart 12: Public Expenditure Classified by Sectors of Fiscal Year 1997	17
Chart 13: Public Expenditure on Education as of 1997	18
Chart 14: Annual Expenditure on Education in 1997	18

THAILAND

Basic Information

Name of the Country:	The Kingdom of Thailand
Total area:	513,115 sq.km.
Population:	61 million
GNP:	$2,740 per head
Capital:	Bangkok
Language:	Thai
Main religion:	Buddhism: 95% Muslim:4%
Ethnic groups:	Thai: (including mix of Thai-Chinese, Thai-Lao, and Thai-others which are assimilated into Thai culture) 95% Muslim Malays, hill peoples, and others : 5%
Currency:	Baht (as of June 1998: 40:30 : $1)
Population growth (per 1000):	17
Infant mortaltity rate (per 1000):	32
Life expectancy at birth:	male: 65.1; female: 72.7 (1997)

Key Educational Indicators

Years of compulsory education:	6 years
Pre-primary education:	90.78%
Primary school enrollment:	90.66%
Lower Secondary school enrollment:	72.54%
Upper Secondary school enrollment:	46.78%
Tertiary education enrollment:	19.34% (excluding open universities)
Adult literacy rate:	93.8%
Adult illiteracy 15 years and above:	2.61 million
Overall illiteracy rate:	6.2% (male: 4.0% female : 8.4%)
Expenditure on education:	$5,685 m. (1998)
as of GNP:	3.8%; as of Govt. expenditure: 23.2% (1998)

Notes: There are different figures in enrollment rates due to different database for calculation. According to the data provided by MOE, primary school enrollment: 83.49%, Lower secondary: 66.03% and Upper secondary: 40.16%)

The Country in Brief

Thailand, formerly known to the world as Siam, has a long history of nearly 800 years. The country, located in Southeast Asia, is rich in culture and natural resources. The Kingdom came into existence around 1220 when the Thai rulers threw out the Khmer yoke and established an independent state. The Thai language was invented during this period by

King Ramkhamhaeng, whose inscription was considered to be the masterpiece of Thai literature and a main source of Sukhothai history. In the fifteenth century, Sukhothai became weak and incorporated into the Kingdom of Ayutthaya which emerged as a strong state. At the time of the Ayutthaya period, the Kingdom began trading relations with foreign countries, beginning with the Chinese, and later, the Dutch, British and French. In the 1680s, the Ayutthaya regime established a good relationship with France when King Narai and King Louis XIV exchanged their embassies. The glory of Ayutthaya diminished with the Burmese invasion in 1767. After the destruction of the capital, King Taksin managed to unite the fragile states and overthrew the Burmese. Thonburi became the capital for a short while. Then, the successor of King Taksin reconstructed Krungthep (Bangkok) as a new capital and became the first King of the Royal House of Chakri. Currently, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the beloved monarch and the central conscience of the Thai citizens, is the ninth king in the Chakri dynasty.

Thailand's movement towards Western modernization took place in the mid-nineteenth century in the reign of King Chulalongkorn when he perceived the need for economic and social transformation. Because of his broad vision about the country's modernization, King Chulalongkorn initiated several social and political reforms, such as the bloodless emancipation of slaves, introduction of cabinet government and creation of military units, a police department and other modern services. The drastic reforms helped to preserve the country from Western colonization.

Another major change in Thai politics took place in 1932, when there was a bloodless revolution resulting in a constitutional monarchy. Since 1960, Thailand has experienced extraordinarily rapid economic growth, and has often been referred to as an emerging "economic tiger" in the region. The economic boom was fundamentally derived from export-oriented development, the tourism industry and foreign investment. Support for economic development is the strong foundation of the country's education system which has played a major role in producing the human resources essentially needed by the country. However, economic growth has also brought about discontent since the discrepancies between the rich and poor have become greater.

Recently, the unexpected financial crisis in mid-1997 has caused a serious slowdown in economic growth, and forced the country to re-examine its development policy and the consumption patterns of people. The education system is affected by the economic crisis and needs to adjust its role to the country's situation, while at the same time needing to keep pace with the rapidly changing world of information and technology.

The Traditional Education System

From the Sukhothai period in the early thirteenth century to the early Rattanakosin period in the mid-nineteenth century (1220-1868), the education system of Thailand was fundamentally unchanged, in form and in content. There was no systematic form of schooling. Education took place only in the palace where children of the royal and noble families were educated to serve in the palace, and in the monasteries where sons of the

commoners were taught basic literacy skills and religious doctrines. Some of the boys would later become novices or enter the monkhood to continue religious and literacy studies. Since there were no formal schools at the time, the Buddhist monasteries became the centres of all sorts of learning. Although the focus was on reading, writing and religion, other areas of education were also addressed in the monasteries, including astronomy, medicine, law, philosophy, sculpture and other sciences. In terms of skills learning, by and large, children and youth learned to master technical skills from their parents, or through apprenticeship with a skilled person in the community. Education for girls barely existed. Young girls basically learned to perform household chores and other domestic work from their mothers and relatives. Apart from the monastic education, there was no systematic formal education. This mode of monastic education dominated the Thai education system until the Rattanakosin period.

In the mid-nineteenth century, the education system in Thailand was influenced by missionaries, and by the threat of western imperialism. Formal education through schooling began to gain momentum in the reign of King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910). The perception was that if the country was to survive imperialism, there was a need for modernization. During this period, several social development initiatives towards modernization were undertaken, including the emancipation of slaves. Education, then, was perceived as an essential instrument for the country's modernization. A formal school was first set up in the royal palace in 1871, and then more schools were gradually established to provide education for children of the royal families and nobles. In 1884, the first school for commoners was founded. Five years later, a decree on the organization of provincial education was issued, resulting in a greater number of public schools for commoners in the provinces. The schools were basically set up in the monasteries. This was the turning point in the development of Thailand's education system since it finally set the seal on the expansion of mass education based on the traditional monastic institutions. At the initial stage, the main purpose of schooling was to prepare young people to work in government services. In 1917, the first university was established, and a Primary School Act was promulgated in 1921, requiring every 7-year-old child to receive free education until 14 years of age.

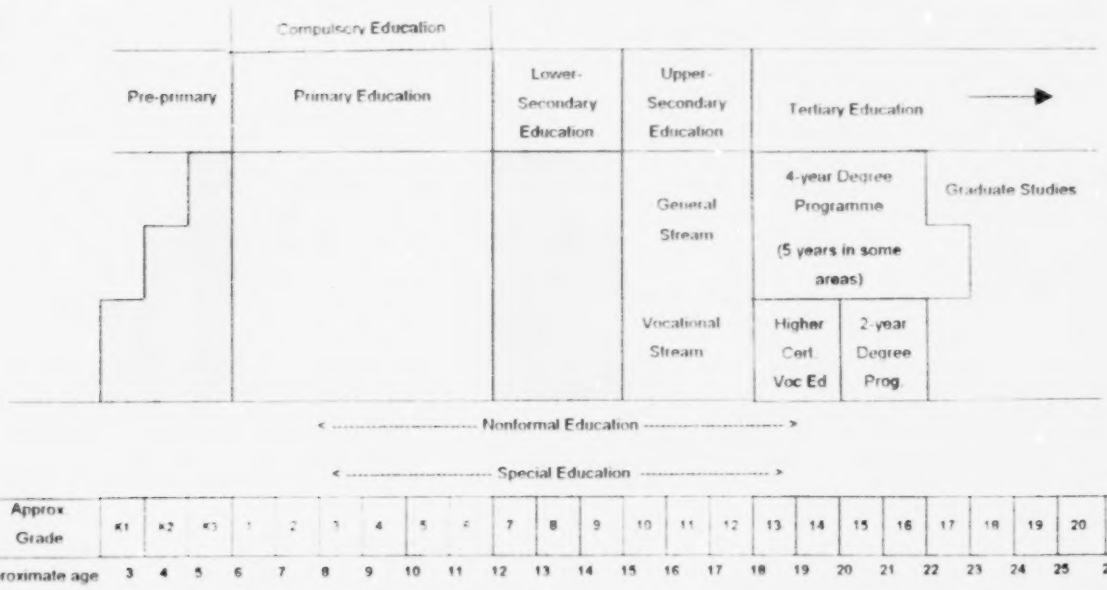
The Current Education System

The modern education system dates back to the period of the civilian revolution and constitutional monarchy in 1932 when the country introduced the National Scheme of Education. In 1960, in accordance with the National Economic Development Plan, the first National Education Development Plan (1961-1966) was initiated. Henceforth, education has played a major role as a leading instrument for national development. A large number of primary schools were established to provide basic education for Thai citizens in the provinces down to the village level. Most of the primary schools established in the old days were located in the monastery compounds. At the same time, secondary, vocational and tertiary education institutions were expanded to meet the manpower requirements of the country. After the student-led revolution in 1973, education reform of the curriculum, school structure and administrative system was introduced to make education more relevant to real life and the needs of society.

The current education system of Thailand is based on the 6:3:3 model, comprising 6 years of compulsory education, 3 years of lower secondary education and 3 years of upper secondary education. Pre-primary education ranges from one to three years and is currently accessible in most communities, even in rural areas. In some rural areas, the pre-primary education is organized in form of child-care centres. By and large, most pre-primary schools offer two to three years education for children aged 3-5. The entry point for primary school is at the age of 6. All primary schools provide at least six years of compulsory education, and some primary schools offer up to lower secondary level as part of the plan to extend the length of compulsory education. There are two main channels of education at upper secondary level: the academic stream which prepares students for universities, and the vocational stream which prepares students for the skilled labour market. According to the Eighth Education Development Plan (1997-2001) and the new Constitution, the State will have to provide free education up to grade 12 to all citizens.

Tertiary education at the baccalaureate level typically requires four years of study. Some programmes, however, require five years. A master's programme normally requires two years of study beyond a bachelor degree, whereas a doctoral study requires approximately four years of study and research after the master's degree program. Graduate studies are offered in both private and public institutions. Some universities also offer international programmes conducted in English in some areas of studies for foreign and Thai students at undergraduate and graduate levels. There are also two public open universities accommodating more than half a million students.

Age-Grade Structure of the Education System in Thailand



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The school examination system is relatively decentralized. Examination papers are developed and administered by each school. However, an entrance examination is required in order to get into some renowned schools at grades 7 and 10. In 1994, the Department of General Education implemented the straw-drawing method for new enrolment which requires secondary schools to enroll without an examination at least 60% of their new students from children and youth who live in the area near the schools. The rest 40% are selected through the entrance examination. In 1998, the figure of enrollment without an examination has increased to 80%. In 1999, all schools, except for a few famous ones, is expected to admit 100% of the new students from those who live nearby.

The university entrance examination is administered by the Ministry of University Affairs as a means to select the most qualified students to study in public universities. Similarly, some private universities also require an entrance examination. From 1999, the average GPA of students in grades 10-12 will account for 10% of the admission to university, together with the entrance examination. If this method proves to be effective, the proportion of GPA can be greater although some university departments are still questioning the standards of the schools' GPAs.

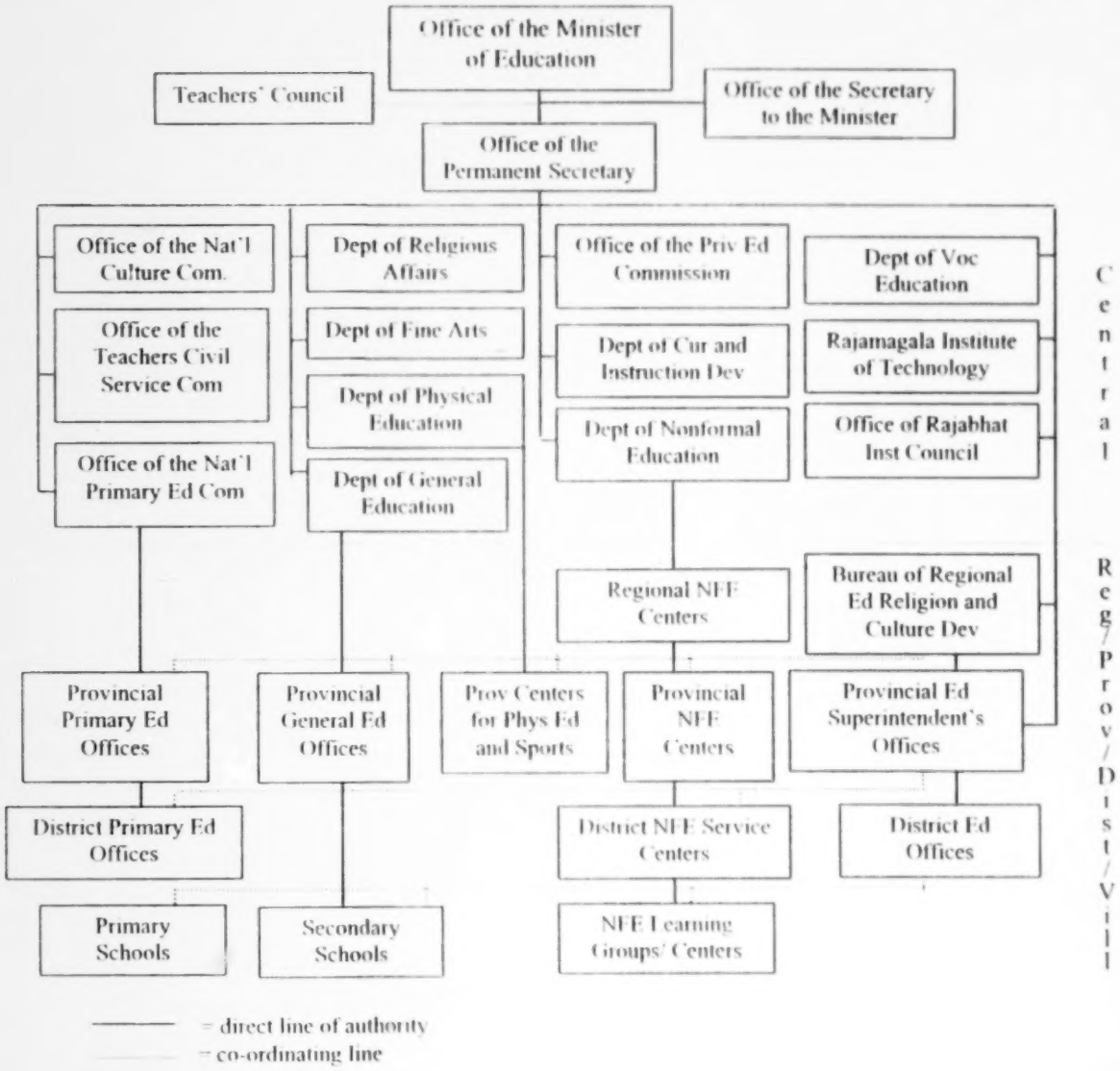
Nonformal education also takes a significant role in providing basic and continuing education for disadvantaged and minority people, who do not have an opportunity to study in the regular school system. Currently, there are more than four million adult learners participating in nonformal education programmes offered by the Department of Nonformal Education and other organizations, including NGOs.

The language of communication and instruction in all schools in Thailand is Thai, the mother tongue and national language. As Thailand is quite homogeneous, it can be said that nearly all Thais can understand the national language. Only in some Muslim villages, especially in the four southern provinces, is the Arabic language taught in school in addition to Thai. English is taught as a foreign language in primary and secondary schools, starting from grade 1 upwards. Also, English is used as a medium of instruction in international schools, and in international programmes at the tertiary level.

The Administrative Structure

The educational administration system in Thailand, in parallel with other public administrative structures, comprises three main levels: the central, regional and local levels. There are four main educational agencies responsible for educational policy, administration and implementation: namely, the Office of the National Education Commission, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of University Affairs, and the Ministry of Interior. The Office of the National Education Commission (ONEC), attached to the Office of the Prime Minister, is responsible for the development of national policies and plans of education at all levels. The Ministry of Education is responsible for primary, secondary, vocational and teacher education, including nonformal education. The Ministry also supervises private schools at all levels, except for the degree level. The Ministry of Interior is in charge of primary schools in the Bangkok Metropolitan and in the municipal areas

The Organizational Chart of the Ministry of Education


Office of the Minister of Education
Teachers' Council
Office of the Secretary to the Minister
Office of the Permanent Secretary
Office of the Nat'l Culture Com.
Office of the Teachers Civil Service Com
Office of the Nat'l Primary Ed Com
Dept of Religious Affairs
Dept of Fine Arts
Dept of Physical Education
Dept of General Education
Office of the Priv Ed Commission
Dept of Cur and Instruction Dev
Dept of Nonformal Education
Dept of Voc Education
Rajamagala Institute of Technology
Office of Rajabhat Inst Council
Regional NFE Centers
Bureau of Regional Ed Religion and Culture Dev
Provincial Primary Ed Offices
Provincial General Ed Offices
Prov Centers for Phys Ed and Sports
Provincial NFE Centers
Provincial Ed Superintendent's Offices
District Primary Ed Offices
District NFE Service Centers
District Ed Offices
Primary Schools
Secondary Schools
NFE Learning Groups/ Centers
Central
Reg/Prov/Dist/Vill
= direct line of authority
= co-ordinating line

throughout the country. The Ministry of University Affairs is in charge of public and private colleges and universities. Although there are some overlaps between the Ministry of University Affairs and the Ministry of Education at the tertiary level, all the educational institutes at degree levels are supervised by the Ministry of University Affairs, with the exception of the Rajabhat Institutes and the Rajamagala Institutes of Technology which are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.

Apart from these four major agencies, other Government agencies are also responsible for specialized education in their own areas of expertise. For instance, the Ministry of Defense is responsible for cadet schools and military education, the Ministry of Public Health is in charge of nursing colleges and health education, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives is in charge of forestry and fishery institutes.

Within the Ministry of Education, there are 14 departments/offices responsible for different areas of educational implementation and administration. There are 12 bureaus of regional education, religion and culture development, and 75 and 812 education superintendent offices at the provincial and district levels respectively. Some departments also have their representatives at the provincial and district levels. The administrative structure of the Ministry of Education is illustrated in the organizational chart.

Access to Education and Enrolment

The massive expansion of schools in the 1960s and 1970s has resulted in the establishment of primary schools in most villages, and secondary schools at the district level. With the exception of hill people and the disabled, currently the education system in Thailand has been able to accommodate most school-age children. In recent years, access to education from pre-primary to higher education has increased dramatically. Besides the regular school system, nonformal education in Thailand has also played a crucial role in providing educational opportunity for the disadvantaged. By and large, most Thais have access to either formal or nonformal education up to the secondary level.

The gross enrolment rate at all levels has increased gradually at all levels. In 1997, the enrolment rates were: 90.78% for pre-primary education, 90.66% for primary education, 72.54% and 46.78% for lower and upper secondary education respectively, and 19.34% for the tertiary level (excluding open universities). In 1997, the number of students at each level are as follows: pre-primary: 2,906,721; primary: 5,927,940; lower secondary: 2,462,631; upper secondary: 1,620,434 (877,092 in general education, and 743,342 in vocational education); and tertiary: 901,857 (out of this figure, 380,387 of them enroll in junior-college level). There are also 531,382 students who enroll in the two open universities. About 57,617 students study at the graduate level, 1,392 of them are studying at doctoral level. There are also 529,168 students studying in the two open universities. In all, there are 13.82 million students, or approximately 65% of the 21.26 million school-age population (3-24 years old) in the school system.

There are also two Buddhist universities in Bangkok with several campuses in the provinces for Buddhist monks, novices and the general public to undertake religious and social studies. There are currently 6,246 students at the bachelor's level and 39 of them are at the master's level.

There are 41 special schools accommodating 7,014 handicapped students. About 30,000 students receive welfare education. As for the hill people and the handicapped, their access to education is still limited. Further expansion of educational opportunity for these disadvantaged groups has to be accelerated to incorporate them into the mainstream society.

The proportion of male and female students enrolling in schools at all levels is relatively comparable. Male students enroll more at lower levels of education whereas females enroll more at higher levels of education. The proportion of male and female students at each level are: pre-primary level: 50.9:49.1; primary education: 51.5: 48.5; lower secondary: 49.7:50.3; upper secondary: 48.8:51.2 (45.3:54.7 in general education and 53.2:46.8 in vocational education); and tertiary education: 45.7:54.3.

Private Institutions and Their Roles

The private institutions in Thailand have gradually increased their roles in educational provision, particularly at the higher level. Currently, 42% of higher education institutions are operated by the private sector. There has been an increasing trend for the private sector to open more technical and business schools. However, the proportion of private schools at lower levels is still minimal as private institutions constitute only 5.36%, 4.31%, and 8.66% of pre-primary, primary, and secondary education respectively.

In terms of proportion, students from the private schools account for only a small portion. The proportion of students in public and private schools are as follows: primary level: 87.1:12.9; lower secondary level: 94.1:5.9; upper secondary level: 81.2:18.8 (96.1:3.9 in general education and 61.9:38.1 in vocational education) and tertiary education: 75:25. Only in vocational education and tertiary education does the proportion of private students account for more than 25 per cent. This is because private investment can make more profit in higher levels of education than at lower levels.

In addition, there are also 34 international schools which employ English as a medium of instruction. Among these, 18 are located in Bangkok while the rest are in other big cities, such as Phuket, Hat Yai, Chiang Mai, Rayong, Udornthani, and Nakhon Rachasima.

Nonformal Education

Nonformal education in Thailand has played a major role in educational development since the late 1970s when the Department of Nonformal Education was established in 1979. The main target group of nonformal education is disadvantaged people, particularly those in rural areas. Several NFE programmes have been offered to provide educational opportunities for those who cannot afford to enroll in regular schools due to economic and personal constraints. Five regional, 75 provincial and 861 district NFE Service Centres have been set up to provide NFE services for the people outside the school system. The Department also operates more than 34,000 public libraries and village reading centres all over the country. The activities in nonformal education may be categorized into three main areas of services: basic education, vocational education, and information services.

The basic education area covers such programmes as functional literacy, hill areas education, and continuing education at lower and upper secondary levels. Among the programmes offered, the distance education programme at lower and upper secondary levels is popular among adults and youths who wish to continue their education.

The area of vocational education covers interest group learning, vocational short-course learning, skills development training, and vocational certificate programmes. The information services covers the provision of public libraries, village reading centres, educational science centres, radio and TV programmes, community learning centres, and life-long education programmes.

As of July 1979, there were more than 6,268 government officials, 4,400 temporary employees, and up to 115,975 group facilitators to organize basic and vocational education for more than three million people. The Department of Nonformal Education also offers special programmes for particular target groups, such as programmes for hill-tribe people, the elderly, inmates, servicemen, and the disabled.

Apart from the Department of Nonformal Education, other departments and ministries also offer nonformal education for people in some other areas. For instance, the Department of Community Development organizes child-care centres for preschool-age children; the Department of Vocational Education offers several nonformal education courses ranging from a few weeks to one year; and the Department of Skill Development, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, offers several courses in technical skill development through the National Institute of Skill Development and its six regional institutes. Some NGOs also organize nonformal education programmes in the areas of their specialization, such as the Hill Area Development Foundation, which organizes basic education for hill people in the northern provinces. In all, more than four million people have participated in some area of nonformal education.

Education for Minorities and the Handicapped

Currently, the Department of Nonformal Education has organized nonformal education programmes for the Muslims in the South so that they can learn to read and write, and continue their education. Most of the Thai Muslims have access to education, at least through the compulsory level. The access to education for the hill-tribe people is still limited. The Department of Nonformal Education has developed a Hill Area Education programme designed specifically for the hill people. Volunteer teachers have been sent to live and teach children and adults in tribal communities. The curriculum and learning materials developed by the Department of Nonformal Education have also been used by other organizations, including NGOs that work in tribal communities. However, since the hill-tribe people live in remote and scattered areas, providing education for all 800,000 of them in Thailand has become an arduous task. Currently, there are 403 "walking volunteer teachers" under the administration of the Department of Non-Formal Education teaching

19,222 students in 391 hill-tribe communities. Compared to the total tribal population, the number of people who actually have access to education is still minimal. Greater efforts have to be exerted to provide basic education for all of the hill people.

As for the education of the handicapped, the Department of General Education has established special schools for handicapped students. Currently there are 7,014 students studying in 41 special schools, 20 of which are for hearing impaired learners, 2 for the blind and 19 for the handicapped. In terms of proportion, the education provided for the disabled is still small in scale. There is still a great number of handicapped children who do not have an opportunity to go to school. In recent years, there has been an experiment in several primary and secondary schools to place handicapped students in regular classrooms so that they can be well integrated with normal children, and feel a part of society.

In addition, there are some other disadvantaged groups that formal education has not yet adequately managed to reach. These groups of people include rural women, military servicemen, inmates, the elderly, people in the labour force, and slum dwellers. Although the Department of Non-Formal Education has initiated some educational programmes for them, the scope of services is still minimal. There are still many things to be done to help increase their educational opportunities, as well as to improve their quality of life.

The Education Reform

During recent years, one of the major movements in the educational milieu has been the introduction of education reform. The reform was initiated by the Ministry of Education in December 1995, with the intention to revise and amend the existing educational operational approaches in order to eliminate the existing problems and enhance the quality of education. The main policies of the education reform are:

1) To accelerate the expansion of education for all groups of people, particularly pre-school age children, minorities and disadvantaged people, as well as improvement of the quality of education.
2) To reform the teaching and learning processes.
3) To reform the teacher education system.
4) To reform the educational administration and management at all levels.
5) To produce middle-level skilled and higher-level skilled manpower.

The reform focused on four areas: the school, the teacher, the curriculum and the administration. The school reform placed emphasis on school mapping, criteria for the ideal size of the school and minimum standard environment, and the devolution of decision-making and school management to the school board. The teacher reform aimed to build professional awareness, enhance performance efficiency, and revise welfare and social security for teachers. The curriculum reform focused on the improvement of the quality of education concerning the teaching/learning process, and the evaluation system. The teaching of English as a foreign language, previously begun at grade 5 in public schools, has been

shifted to grade 1 in all schools as a part of the curriculum reform. The administrative reform placed emphasis on promoting the role of family, community and private sector in educational administration and management through the devolution of decision-making power to the local level, and increasing educational expenditures to 6-7% of GDP.

The education reform has led to the following consequences:

1) The educational budget increased from 133 billion baht in 1996 to 163 billion baht, a 22.5% increase, in the 1997 fiscal year.
2) English has become a subject taught in first grade since 1996.
3) The cabinet approved the professional advance from Teacher Level 6 to Teacher Level 7 without having to submit academic work for consideration.
4) A policy to raise the standards of education from pre-primary to tertiary education has been drawn up.
5) There has been a clear policy on providing 12 years free education for all children. This policy was also included in the Eighth National Social and Economic Development Plan. The new Constitution, promulgated in late 1997, also demands the government to provide 12-year free education for the people.

There are about 20,000 schools under the Education Reform Project. These schools were required to improve their school environment and encourage the local community to be involved in school administration and management.

In addition to the education reform initiated by the Ministry of Education, the Office of the National Education Commission (ONEC) has also initiated recommendations for the reform of the entire education system. The ONEC has recommended reform on specific issues as a means to keep up with the pace of change in the world community. The reform suggested by ONEC comprises three main areas: teacher reform, higher education reform, and the reform of the teaching and learning system. Two main strategic components of the education reform were proposed: reform of learning, and reform of management. The reform of learning places emphasis on basic child development, diversification of basic educational provision, enhancing international competitiveness, and promoting lifelong learning. The reform of management stresses such areas as management by local commissions, co-operation with the private sector, higher education reform, quality assurance, and resource mobilization.

Future Directions and Trends

Due to the advance in science and technology and rapid economic development, there has been a growing demand for higher levels of education. The importance of education for individual and national development has forced the education system to conform to the needs of the country. In the case of Thailand, given the previous rapid

economic development and the recent unexpected economic setbacks, the revitalization of the education system is inevitable and indispensable if it is to play a vital role in personal, economic and social development.

Based on the Eighth Educational Development Plan (1997-2001), the scheme has set forth the following objectives:

1) To broaden the educational foundation of the masses up to the secondary level.

2) To improve the quality of education to be responsive to the needs of the individual, the community and the nation, and to promote the utmost competency development of the learners.

3) To foster the Thai education system as a key instrument for national self-reliance, and to build up economic development and the stability of the nation.

In order to achieve these main objectives, nine areas of major educational programmes and implementation strategies have been outlined as follows.

1) Promotion of Basic Education for All. This programme aims to provide basic preparation for preschool-age children, make preschool education accessible to 90 per cent of children aged 3-5 years old, and increase lower and upper secondary school enrollment to 95 and 70 per cent respectively, as well as establish educational networks with businesses, NGOs and community organizations.

2) Improvement of Educational Quality. The measures for this area include: curriculum improvement, analysis of instructional methodologies, evaluation and measurement systems, and development of educational media.

3) Development of the Teacher Education System. This area aims to recruit competent and qualified persons to be trained as teachers; provide continual in-service training for teachers; and improve management systems, as well as social welfare and incentives for teachers.

4) Production and Development of Manpower in the Areas of Science and Technology and Social Science. This plan intends to increase the production of human resources in the area of science and technology from 34 to 40 per cent by 2001 and to 50 per cent in 2006, and to upgrade the technical skills of middle-skilled and high-skilled manpower for the industrial and services sectors.

5) Promotion of Research and Development. This area of the implementation plan aims to increase private and Government budgets for research and development to no less than one per cent of GDP. The Government budget on research and development should be between 0.5-0.75 per cent of GDP. There will also be greater support of higher education institutions to expand research and development activities in the social sciences within the Thai context, as well as the establishment of research co-operation with the private sector and international institutions, and the use of research outcomes for national development.

6) Development of an Educational Administration and Management System. The role of the central administrative offices will be decreased, while at the same time promoting greater administration decentralization to provincial and local organizations.

7) Development of Higher Education. This area places emphasis on creating unity in higher education, standards and quality assurance, and promotion of private institutions to produce graduates in areas which are in greater demand, as well as supporting public universities to be financially self-reliant.

8) Pooling All Resources for Education. In order to pool all resources, especially from the private sector to be involved in education, the Government will expansion of basic education, and increase the educational investment to 4 per cent of GDP. The private sector, including NGOs, will be encouraged to participate in educational provision and investment.

9) Development of Information Technology for Educational Management. This area concentrates on building co-operation between the public and private sectors in the development of information systems, educational information networks, and linkages between educational institutions so as to maximize the use of technology for the improvement of education.

In addition, the Government has currently drafted a new Education Act which is expected to be promulgated in 1998. The highlights in the new Education Act include key elements, such as creating unity in educational management, decentralization in educational management and financing, providing free education up to 12 years, and placing emphasis on child-centred teaching approaches, as well as stressing lifelong learning for the people.

Selected Educational Statistics

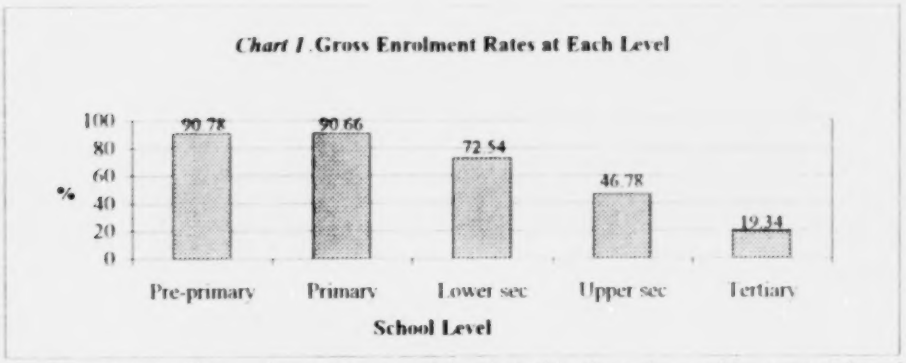


Chart 1 shows the enrolment rate at each level. In this chart, the enrolment rate is based on ONEC's data. See MOE's data on the notes of page one.

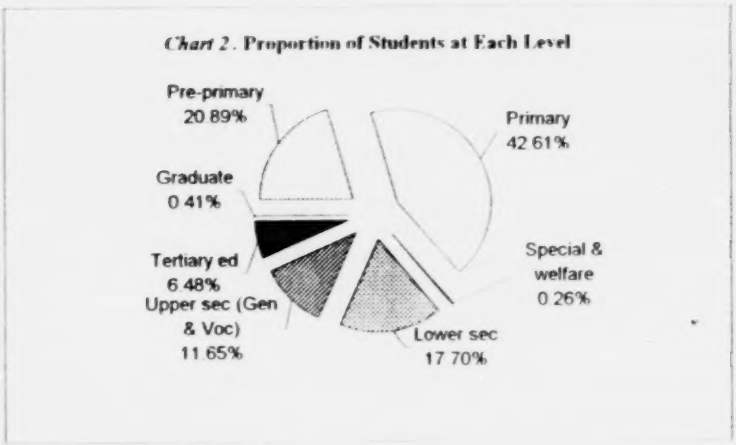


Chart 2 shows the proportion of students in each level. In 1997, the number of students at each level is as follows:

Pre-primary:	2,906,721
Primary:	5,927,940
Lower sec:	2,462,631
Upper sec (general and voc)	1,620,434
Tertiary:	901,857
Graduate:	57,617
Special & welfare:	35,607

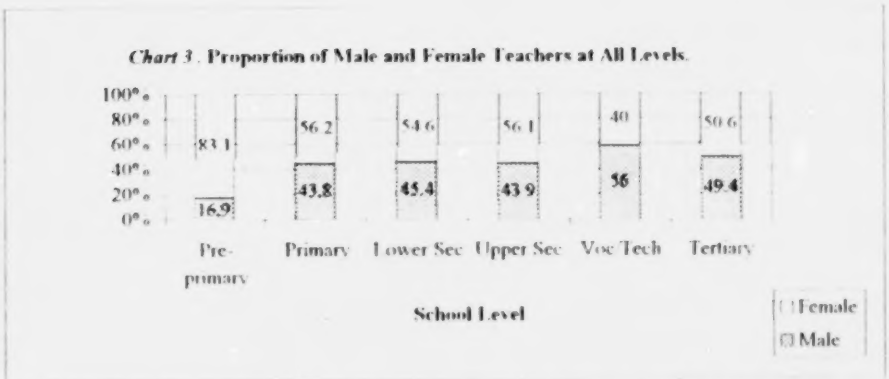


Chart 3 shows the majority of teachers at pre-primary level are female. At other levels, there are slightly more female than male teachers, with the exception of vocation/technical education.

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Chart 4. **Proportion of male and female students at all levels**

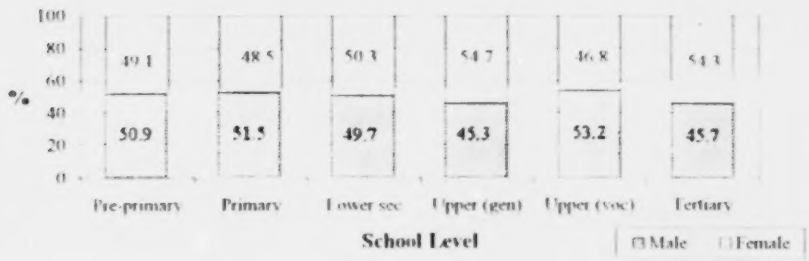

Chart 4 shows that Male and female students are proportionately comparable. There are more female students in the upper secondary (general) and tertiary levels.

Chart 5. **Number of Public and Private Institutions (1996)**

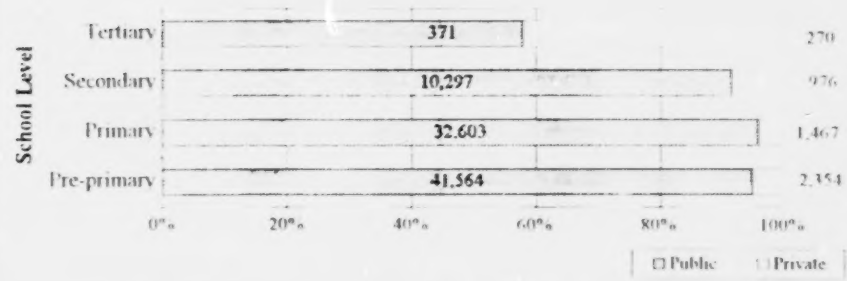

Chart 5 illustrates that with the exception of the higher education level, private institutions account for only a small portion of the educational institutions in Thailand.

Chart 6. **Proportion of students from public and private institutions**

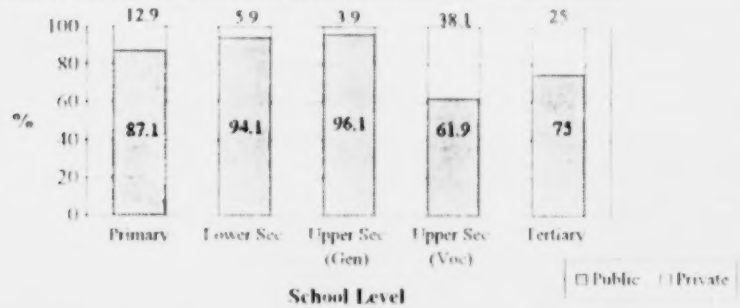

Chart 6 shows that there are very few students in private schools. Only in vocational and tertiary education do private school students account for more than 25%.

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***Chart 7*. Number of Participants in Nonformal Education**

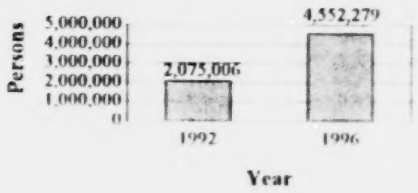

Chart 7 illustrates that From 1992 to 1996, participants in nonformal education of all agencies have more than doubled

***Chart 8*. Proportion of NFE Participants in Each Department (1996)**

Chart 8 shows the proportion of NFE students in each department. The number of NFE students in 1996, according to organizations provided, are: Dept of NFE: 3,569,085, Office of Priv Commission: 678,324, Dept of Voc Ed: 265,332, Dept of Com Dev: 35,538.

***Chart 9*. Proportion of Male and Female Participants in NFE**

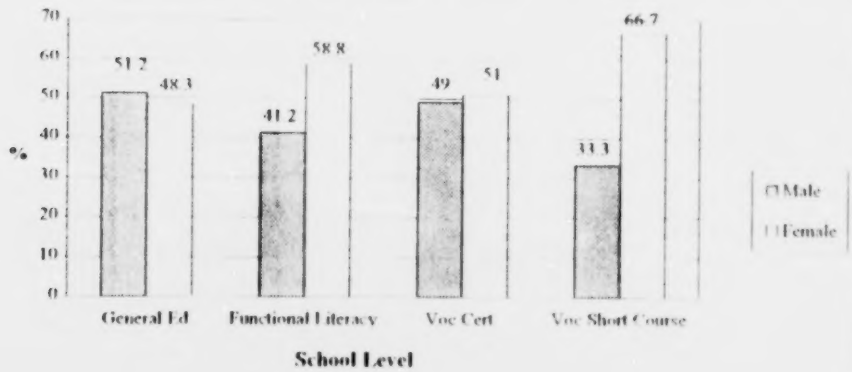

Chart 9 illustrates that the male and female participants in nonformal education are proportionately comparable, except for functional literacy and vocational short courses where there are more female participants

***Chart 10*. Qualifications of Teachers in Public and Private Schools**

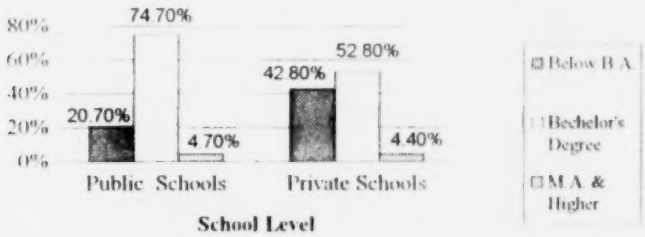

Chart 10 shows that a little more than half of the teachers in private schools, and about three-fourths of the public school teachers obtain bachelor's degrees. Nearly 5% of the teachers from both sectors earn masters' degrees or higher.

***Chart 11*. Qualifications of Academic Staff at the Tertiary Level**

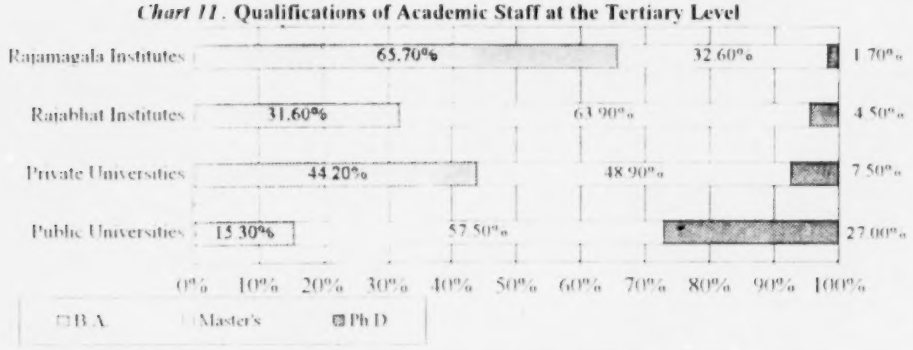

Chart 11 illustrates the qualifications of teaching staff at the tertiary level and the proportion of staff with degrees earned.

***Chart 12*. Public Expenditure Classified by Sectors for Fiscal Year 1997**

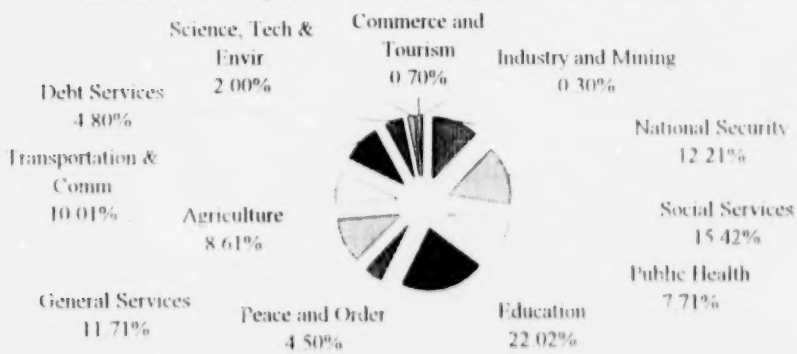

Chart 12 illustrates that the education budget in 1997 gets the highest proportion of the government expenditure of 22.02 %.

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***Chart 13*. Public Expenditure on Education as of 1997**

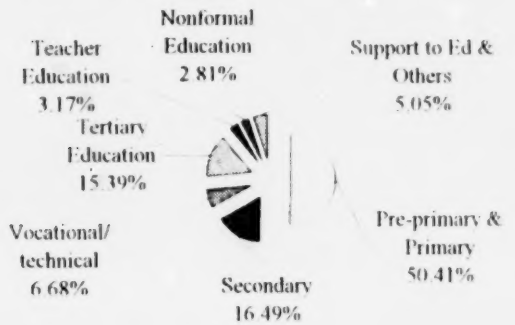

Chart 13 shows that pre-primary and primary education receive half of the total education budget. Secondary education and tertiary education receive 16.49% and 15.39% respectively, and nonformal education receives only 2.81% of the education budget.

***Chart 14*. Annual Expenditure on Education in 1997**

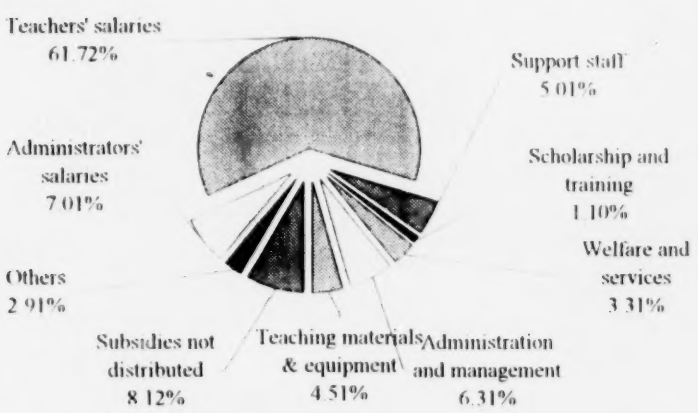

Chart 14 illustrates that the largest portion of the annual expenditure in education goes to teachers' and administrators' salaries (68.73%). The budget for improvement of teaching materials and equipment and training accounts for 4.51% and 1.10% respectively.

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